


# Southwest Gateway Project

---



**Guidelines for the Redesign of the  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing  
and Its Public Spaces  
Along 14th Street**

---



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

<https://archive.org/details/southwestgateway00thom>

# Southwest Gateway Project

---

**Guidelines for the Redesign of the  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing  
and Its Public Spaces  
Along 14th Street**

---

Report of the Design Charrette Team  
28-29 March 1991

Sponsored by the  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing

With the Assistance of the  
Design Arts Program  
National Endowment for the Arts

August 1991

---

*Cover photograph of the  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing,  
14th Street vista, taken in 1939.*

# Contents

---

Issues and a Mandate	3
A Challenge at Two Scales	4
Summary of the Charrette Team's Recommendations	6
Recommendations Regarding the Design Team and Design Process	8
Urban Design Concerns	9
Architecture and Landscape Concerns	12
<i>Appendices</i>	
A. Background on the Buildings and Context	19
B. Charrette Agenda	22
C. Charrette Participants	23

# Issues and a Mandate

---

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing occupies two buildings at the southwest gateway to Washington from Virginia, across the 14th Street Bridge. The Main building, spanning the block between 14th and 15th Streets, was constructed in 1914. The Annex was constructed in 1938, between 14th and 13th Streets. In the intervening years, the buildings have been modified to reflect the changing needs of production and security. As a result, the Bureau's 14th Street facades and entrances, seen and used by thousands of tourists and employees each day, have deteriorated into an unsightly hodgepodge of shapes and materials.

The Bureau is currently making major changes to the Main Building to construct a waste-water treatment facility. To secure approval of the Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission, the Bureau has agreed to upgrade the Main Building 14th Street facade and public corridor to one of dignity and unity befitting its highly visible location at the Capital's southwest gateway. As Bureau Director Peter H. Daly put it: "We want a design that reinforces the original concept of these facilities as both a monument and a functioning — and today, high-tech — factory. The result should be a welcoming complement to the beauty of the Mall and expressive of the life and energy of our operations."

The Bureau's goals for this project, called the Southwest Gateway Project, are:

- To enhance the architectural and functional appearances of the properties along 14th, C, and D Streets, SW, as appropriate to their location at the southwest gateway to the Capital.
- To provide a vista along 14th Street that is in harmony with the other structures nearby, particularly the new Holocaust Memorial Museum and the Portals — a mixed use development project.
- To develop a master plan and guidelines for the design and construction of changes to its facilities that will result in a quality design product.
- To upgrade the Bureau's properties to meet its production needs and comply with all environmental and other responsibilities for the operation of its facilities.
- To proceed without serious disruption to the Bureau's operations and security.

To help meet these objectives, the Bureau asked the Design Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, through its Federal Design Improvement component, to organize a charrette to develop appropriate design guidelines that will provide a vision and direction for the design and construction process along 14th Street. This charrette occurred on March 28 and 29, 1991. Members of the team were urban designer and planner, Ronald Thomas, the chair of the group, landscape architect Deborah Dalton, architects Hugh Hardy and Barton Phelps, urban designer, architect and preservationist Michael Southworth, and architect and preservationist John Waite. These invited experts did not gather to advocate specific design solutions. Instead, as an all-important first step in the design process, in the pages that follow, they identify critical issues, explore a few design concepts and recommend how the Bureau might proceed to realize its objectives.

# A Challenge at Two Scales

---

One of the most significant facts articulated by the charrette team is that the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's Southwest Gateway Project is both an urban design, architecture and landscape architecture challenge. The urban dimensions of the problem include:

- Devising a powerful concept for the "gateway" itself — a sense of passage along 14th Street that welcomes pedestrian traffic from the north, east and west and vehicular traffic from the south.
- Developing designs for the facades and space between the Main Building and the Annex so that they contribute to the gateway scheme and are integrated with projects to the north and to the south and along the Mall.
- Creating an image for the Main Building that respects the historical qualities of the structure, supports its complex and changing functional needs, and at the same time, conveys the excitement of the currency engraving, printing and other operations that go on inside and its place as the 15th most popular tourist attraction in the nation's capital.
- Addressing vehicular and pedestrian circulation along 14th, 15th and C and D Streets, including difficulties created by delivery trucks, automobiles, commuters, tourist buses, tourmobiles, service vehicles and parking requirements.

The architecture and landscape architecture dimensions of the problem include:

- Getting a clear understanding of the original significance and design evolution of both the Main Building and the Annex.
- Assessing the total internal work processes as they affect the overall building configuration.
- Outlining and managing functional and equipment projections that will shape the development of the buildings over the next 10 to 15 years.
- Devising a strategy for the redesign or enhancement of the existing facades that responds to both the historical character and use of the structures and insures that the buildings are addressed as an architectural whole and not changed in a piecemeal fashion.
- Considering alternatives for enhancing the appearance of the buildings at night.
- Preparing a detailed streetscape/landscape proposal for the circulation and public spaces surrounding the buildings including 15th, C and D Streets as well as 14th Street.
- Developing an imaginative and inviting design for visitor queueing, entry and exhibition/orientation.

---

Each of these aspects of the Southwest Gateway Project is elaborated upon in later sections of this report. As a first step, however, the charrette team believed that recognizing and endorsing this broad approach is critical. It has a major impact on the qualifications and selection of a design team and on the process and phases of the design itself. Moreover, once selected, this interdisciplinary team must prepare a master plan to guide the details of the work — a balanced and comprehensive strategy,

without which any improvements will almost inevitably emerge as piecemeal and uncoordinated. Within the plan, the team must also highlight specific short-term and intermediate objectives for, lacking these goals and achievements, the proposal might remain a series of attractive renderings and unused design guidelines. In the end, the challenge is to deal with the two design scales and create a project schedule that proposes a sequence of design stages that cover the next few years into the twenty-first century.

---

*Photograph of Bureau of Engraving Annex,  
taken January 4, 1939*



# Summary of Recommendations

---

This is a comprehensive listing of the charrette team's recommendations. Each is discussed at greater length in the three sections to follow.

## The Design Team and the Design Process

- The design team selected to execute this project should include these types of expertise: urban design, planning, traffic engineering, architecture, landscape architecture, preservation, graphic design, exhibition design and tourism planning.
- The team leader should be someone comfortable and knowledgeable in many of the disciplines just mentioned with strong interpersonal skills and organizational talents.
- The many components of the Southwest Gateway Project should be summarized in a master plan and be phased so that early stages of the effort generate momentum and enthusiasm for completing the scheme over a given number of years.

## Urban Design Concerns

- The design team should undertake a limited study of problems in and around the site and plans for the surrounding properties to help spell out the overall character of the "gateway" and serve as groundwork for making sure that the Bureau's efforts complement the long-term profile of this significant point in the District's landscape.
- The design proposal should create a single coherent space from the Main Building across 14th Street to the Annex. It should address the facades, the open and public areas adjacent to the facades and recommend appropriate modifications to 14th Street itself.

- The selection of materials, trees and other plants, lights and street furniture should be made so that there is a sense of continuity and coordination with respect to these components along the entire gateway corridor from the Portals to the Mall.

- The design team should devise an architectural image for the Main Building that acknowledges visitor interest in the Bureau's operations, balances the classical with on-going high-tech industrial uses in the structure and creates a new and more coherent facade along 14th Street.

- The Southwest Gateway Project should be an opportunity to investigate overall circulation needs, including the difficulties created by delivery trucks, automobiles, tourist buses, tourmobiles, service vehicles, parking requirements and pedestrians and subsequently to prepare a comprehensive, long-term circulation proposal for all the kinds of traffic on 14th, 15th, C and D Streets.

## Architecture and Landscape Concerns

- As one of the first activities of the Southwest Gateway Project, a thorough and comprehensive historic structures report should be prepared for both the Main Building and Annex in accordance with standards promulgated by the National Park Service and the General Services Administration. The historic structure reports, beside addressing questions of the original form and conditions of the buildings along with subsequent alterations, should also deal with programming issues, code compliance requirements, and the reuse of existing or installation of new mechanical systems.



- 
- The Bureau and/or a design team should prepare a detailed study of projected functional and equipment changes over the next 10 to 15 years as a prerequisite to the development of specific plans for the Southwest Gateway undertaking.
  - The Main Building's 14th Street facade should be a balanced expression of monumental and technical images, a statement to the world of the Bureau's unique work.
  - The Main Building's 14th Street elevation should be reconfigured as a principal facade and be addressed as a whole rather than in the present piecemeal fashion.
  - The Main Building's new facade should include a comfortable gateway/entrance for employees and visitors.
  - The Main Building's roofline and any contemplated functional and/or equipment changes should be thoroughly analyzed.
  - The decking in the courtyards and in the front of the Main Building should be studied so that it does not visually "bury" the basement level or become a barrier to pedestrians walking by.
  - The design of the Annex facade should complement that of the Main Building across the street, so that the two create the sides of a coherent gateway while simultaneously reflecting the differences in the public profiles of the two structures.
  - Pedestrian crossings should be surfaced in distinctive paving.
  - The transition from highway to city street should receive special design attention.
  - A change in paving should be considered as a way to mark vehicular movement in/out of the Bureau.
  - A consistent design for protective barriers, bollards, paving and street furniture should be implemented throughout the site (including C, D and 15th Streets as well as 14th Street) in a way that enhances the sense of place and coherence of the gateway.
  - The design team should prepare an open and public space proposal that complements the architecture and gateway concept, including a landscaping and paving scheme and guidelines for the development of the courtyards and the sidewalks.
  - A complete analysis of the visitor experience including movement sequence, waiting time, queuing, and the reaction to exhibit and sales areas should be prepared.
  - A new public entrance to the Main Building should be designed that creates a welcoming and strong identity for the Bureau.
  - Options should be evaluated to discover the optimum design of the Main Building entry elements in relation to the existing building line and courtyard space as well as in relation to other functional and programmatic needs such as the truck underpass.
  - As a complement to the design of the Main Building entrance itself, the entire visitor sequence from waiting and queuing to exhibition and sales should be studied and improved.
  - The nighttime presence of the both the Annex and the Main Building should be enhanced.

# Design Team and Design Process

---

## The Team

Because the Southwest Gateway Project is an urban design as well as an architecture and landscape architecture problem, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing should insist that work be put in the hands of a multi-disciplinary team. Members of the charrette group felt such a team should have these types of expertise:

- Urban Design
- Planning
- Traffic Engineering
- Architecture
- Landscape Architecture
- Preservation
- Graphic Design
- Exhibition Design
- Tourism Planning

One person could represent more than one of these design areas, and there also should be someone on the team who would act as a liaison with other agencies and departments that have jurisdiction over the surrounding buildings and open spaces.

The team leader should be someone comfortable and knowledgeable in many of the disciplines just mentioned. The person should have a strong design background and be experienced in dealing with urban design, historic structures and perhaps even with manufacturing buildings. Finally, this individual should have strong interpersonal skills and be qualified to organize and coordinate a complex design process, a process that is itself designed and dependent on the appropriate and timely interaction among key players.

## The Project Elements

As is obvious later in this report, the Southwest Gateway Project is composed of many elements — for example, an historic structures report, an urban design analysis, a building analysis, a streetscape design, a facade design, a visitor experience study and the design of an entrance. To coordinate these many steps and help assure the best results, the charrette team concluded that a project master plan and schedule should be completed before design work begins. This should indicate the phasing and deadlines for any investigative analyses and describe how research will be integrated into the design process.

Later, as specific proposals are finalized, the master plan should be expanded to include a detailed agenda of interim projects. Typical of these efforts would be such actions as redesigning the bridge and visitors' entrance, cleaning the buildings, replacing the windows, installing architectural lighting, implementing guidelines for roof profile, and initiating the paving and street furniture plan. The merit of this approach is that each of these phases generates momentum and its own little success and becomes a step toward completing the entire Southwest Gateway Project over a given number of years.

To help conceptualize the problem, the charrette team considered the urban design context as a series of layered precincts. The metropolis itself might be the largest precinct; the next level might be the neighborhood; and the streets, open space and buildings on the specific site might be the sharpest focus. The themes discussed in this section of the report reflect this layered approach.

# Urban Design Concerns

---

## Defining The Gateway Concept

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

The design team should undertake a limited study of problems in and around the site and plans for the surrounding properties to help spell out the overall character of the “gateway” and serve as groundwork for making sure that the Bureau’s efforts complement the long-term profile of this significant point in the District’s landscape.

There is no dispute that 14th Street, south of the Mall, is one of the major entrances to Washington, DC. It is the junction of the highway — Route 395 — and L’Enfant’s urban grid. It is the sharp transition from the random suburban environment to the south and the highly structured park environment of the Mall. It is the meeting of the freeway and the capital’s monumental core, images that overlap as drivers speed by the Jefferson Memorial and end up moving through the Mall with the Washington Monument to one side and the silhouette of the Capitol to the other. It is the point at which the typically tense interaction between pedestrians and automobiles begins and people know they have penetrated the city’s edge.

To make this experience an appropriate “gateway,” however, requires some sophisticated planning and design development. It is an intricate problem composed of many independent elements. One issue is the aesthetic diversity of the architecture. To the

west, the “gateway” site includes the Portals mixed-use development, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Annex and the Department of Agriculture complex. To the east, the streetscape is marked by the Treasury’s “temporary” Liberty Loan Building, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Main Building, the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the original Romanesque revival Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Beyond stylistic differences, designers of the “gateway” would also have to coordinate the ideas and demands of various owners and agencies with jurisdiction over the area.

Still another concern is the traffic, which is anything but homogeneous. To the south of D Street, 14th Street is a divided highway with heavy inbound movement in the morning and equally dense outbound volume in the afternoon. In terms of speed, below Independence Avenue, the average miles-per-hour increases dramatically as drivers contend with traffic lights on the perimeter of the city. Further complicating the situation, the “gateway” should accommodate and be a landmark for pedestrians, be they tourists or employees. Some walk from the west, but most come from the north and east (a Metro exit is located on 12th Street and Independence Avenue). For all these constituencies, the “gateway” should signify arrival and passage.

Clearly, it is beyond the scope of this project and the authority of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to

---

provide a detailed design for the entire “gateway.” On the other hand, the charrette team felt it important that proposals for the Bureau’s two buildings and the space in between contribute to and enhance some larger urban concept.

## Coordinating the Spatial Quality and Details of the Gateway Design

### Charrette Team Recommendation:

- The design proposal should create a single coherent space from the Main Building across 14th Street to the Annex. It should address the facades, the open and public areas adjacent to the facades and recommend appropriate modifications to 14th Street itself.
- The selection of materials, trees and other plants, lights and street furniture should be made so that there is a sense of continuity and coordination with respect to these components along the entire gateway corridor from the Portals to the Mall.

Inevitably, the design of the Bureau’s contribution to the Southwest Gateway will, among other elements, incorporate landscape, paving, street furniture, lighting and perhaps screens and/or additions to the Main Building. From an urban design perspective, the charrette team recommended that these details be coordinated to generate the sense of place essential to any “gateway” and tie the Bureau’s project into the fabric of the city.

## Creating an Image for the Main Building

### Charrette Team Recommendation:

- The design team should devise an architectural image for the Main Building that acknowledges visitor interest in the Bureau’s operations, balances the classical with on-going high-tech industrial uses in the structure and creates a new and more coherent facade along 14th Street.

As noted in the introductory remarks on context, the tour of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing’s operations is the 15th most popular attraction in Washington, DC, drawing more than 500,000 visitors annually. At the same time, the confusing 14th Street facade of the Main Building and the circuitous path of visitors around the structure (a temporary route that will end this year) is uninviting and does little to convey the excitement of the activity within.

The dilemma, of course, is that tourism is subsidiary to two other architectural images. One is the monumental, classical — in this case Beaux Arts — design that is typical of many federal buildings. The colonnaded facade, the imposing cornice and attic, and the deep basement suggest strength, permanence and allusions to the glories of ancient Rome and Greece; expressions that, from an intellectual point of view, befit the importance of the tasks within. By contrast, a second layer of references in the structure

---

are to the factory and industrial functions. Expansive windows, the simplicity and openness of interior courts and the cast iron bridge to the entrance evoke notions of technology, efficiency and the assembly line rather than the bureaucracy.

In addition to these concerns, the Main Building's image is further complicated by a major programmatic transformation. It seems that the original formal entrance — the monumental 15th Street facade — is now, for day-to-day purposes, the back of the building, while the four wings, "U"-shaped courts and numerous additions on 14th Street have become what most perceive as the, albeit somewhat confused, front of the edifice. Given this situation, the charrette team stressed the need to redesign the facades so that they are both functional and visually coherent .

## Solving Circulation Problems

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

■ The Southwest Gateway Project should be an opportunity to investigate overall circulation needs, including the difficulties created by delivery trucks, automobiles, tourist buses, tourmobiles, service vehicles, parking requirements and pedestrians and subsequently to prepare a comprehensive, long-term circulation proposal for all the kinds of traffic on 14th, 15th, C and D Streets.

Circulation on the site is perhaps as bewildering as the facade issues. The combination of intense commuter traffic along 14th Street with the movement of the many vehicles related to the Bureau's operations creates complex traffic patterns. Armored trucks use 14th Street during the early morning hours; semi-trucks drive south of the Main Building and then back into the basement loading docks; other deliveries and pick-ups queue along 12th and D Streets; tourist buses let visitors off on 14th and 15th Streets and Tourmobile trams stop on 15th Street. In addition, there is the need to deal with the requirements of the physically challenged, pedestrians — including tourists and employees, and of course, employee parking for what is a 24-hour production operation.

Presently, the Bureau copes with this array of comings and goings on an ad hoc basis — visitors are routed from 15th Street along the southern edge of the Main Building to the entry bridge on 14th Street while the Holocaust Memorial Museum is under construction, and a parking platform has just been built above a waste-water treatment plant in the northern most court space. This just begins to address the problem. Other ideas that emerged during the charrette included the need to slow 14th Street traffic and introduce a pull-off next to the Main Building, as well as the desirability of developing clearer pedestrian crossings and more attractive planter/barriers and median strips.

# Architecture and Landscape Concerns

---

In urban design and architecture, success is dependent on having a strong concept and then interpreting that with coordinated and well executed details. The comments here summarize the charrette teams' concerns with more detailed issues.

## Clarifying the Context

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

■ As one of the initial phases of the Southwest Gateway Project, a thorough historic structures report should be commissioned, including an in-depth analysis of the surrounding site at the times the buildings were constructed, an assessment of the original condition of the Main Building and Annex and a detailed survey of all the alterations and additions.

Without consulting old photographs and other documents, it is difficult to determine the original design and conditions of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing structures. Over the years, much tinkering has taken place. Particularly in the case of the Main Building, many of these adaptations are visible at the pedestrian and drive-by levels and give the edifice a tawdry image. In a factory setting, where there are continual demands to expand production and improve efficiency, changes are to be expected. On the exterior, cooling towers, a metal screen, infilled windows, additions and raised platforms in the courtyards are evidence of this functional and necessary evolution. Architecturally, however, the modifications have been handled as piecemeal decisions

that, over the decades, have begun to mask or erode the architectural and historical integrity of what were originally clear, visually strong, and basically noble buildings.

In this situation, to develop effective and coherent design alternatives for the future — proposals that enhance both the use and the architectural qualities of the structures — more information is needed. Basic questions need to be asked: What was the original design by architect James Knox Taylor? What materials were specified? How were the 14th and 15th Street facades to relate to the city and to interior operations? What changes have been made over the years and when? When the report is commissioned, the list of required facts can be expanded and refined.

## Understanding Functional Requirements

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

■ The Bureau of Engraving and Printing and/or a design team should prepare a detailed study of projected functional and equipment changes over the next ten to 15 years as prerequisite to the development of specific plans for the Southwest Gateway undertaking.

As has been stated previously, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing is first and foremost a high-tech industrial facility. In this context, what has to be investigated is the impact anticipated functional, mechanical and equipment requirements will have

---

on the exterior and space needs of the buildings. In the years to come, what will be required in terms of fans, cooling towers, stacks, environmentally mandated devices and the like? The Web press project (which produces security documents on rolls rather than sheets and ultimately includes inspection and packaging modules as well as printing equipment) will be initiated shortly. Where will the required incinerators go (they are eight feet in diameter and 35 feet long)? How will interior spaces have to be reconfigured? For the sake of efficiency, should an addition be considered? The charrette team pointed out that answers to these and similar questions can have a major influence on the facade and gateway designs.

## Dealing with the Facades

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

- The Main Building's 14th Street facade should be a balanced expression of monumental and technical images, a statement to the world of the Bureau's unique work.
- The Main Building's 14th Street elevation should be reconfigured as a principal facade and be addressed as a whole rather than in the present piecemeal fashion.
- The Main Building's new facade should include a comfortable gateway/entrance for employees and visitors.
- The Main Building's roofline and any contemplated functional and/or equipment changes should be thoroughly analyzed.

- The decking in the courtyards and in the front of the Main Building should be studied so that it does not visually "bury" the basement level or become a barrier to pedestrians walking by.

- The design of the Annex facade should complement that of the Main Building across the street, so that the two create the sides of a coherent gateway while simultaneously reflecting the differences in the public profiles of the two structures.

The facades of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's facilities were discussed in some detail. The charrette team reiterated, as a fundamental problem and crucial challenge, the need to transform the Main Building's 14th Street facade — which presently is hulking, massive and disconnected from the street — into something more coherent, welcoming and meaningful. This would include dealing with the dual image of the building as both a monument and industrial structure, creating an appropriate 14th Street entrance and developing proposals for the roofline and courtyard areas.

Not to prejudice any future design, several specific architectural options were briefly mentioned during the charrette. One suggestion was to remove the opaque window material and reglaze all the openings with clear glass. Many thought this would reveal the interesting activities inside the building without contradicting the monumental profile of the building. A second concept was to leave exterior equipment and services exposed, designing machinery and additions so that they become part of the architectural vitality of the new facade. As a third

---

notion, there was unanimous agreement that the facades should be lit at night. Outside of these ideas, two distinctive design approaches — an addition strategy and a screen strategy — were explored as ways to deal with the Main Building’s 14th Street facade.

The addition strategy would be to build new space either in front of or between the wings (see sketches on the next page). According to the charrette team, the rationale for this work would be to improve the configuration and efficiency of operations. Potentially the addition could be wide enough to accommodate the new Web presses and on the floors where it was implemented, the Main Building would have a plan that might improve the flow of work.

Obviously, this choice would be an opportunity to create a totally new facade. At the same time, it is a major project subject to a complex and time consuming design review process. Members of the charrette team noted several reasons, however, why this effort might be justified. It provides a chance to create additional spaces for the installation of new technology and new equipment. It may make it easier to respond to OSHA and EPA standards.

It would certainly be an opportunity to reassert architecturally the position of the Bureau as a world class operation, a leader in security documents printing. Finally, the capital costs for the addition could be spread over many years and be included in the projected expenses for new technology and the response to security and environmental requirements.

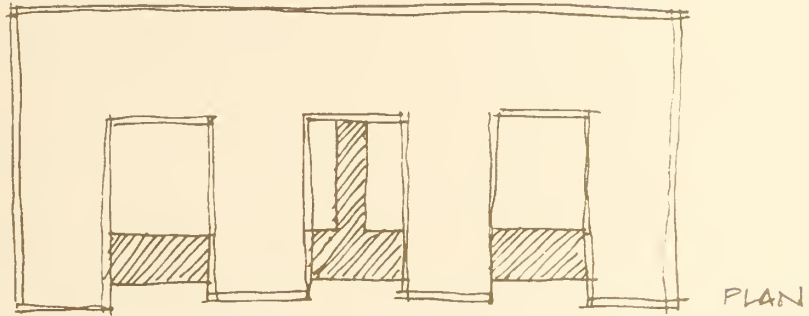
Screens are a less radical facade strategy that, while doing nothing to improve the operation of the building, may also provide an acceptable solution. Such screens should probably be set back from the existing wing facades and many alternative designs should be evaluated. Among the issues that should be considered are commissioning an artist for the work, fabricating the screen from various metals and perhaps even landscape elements, and using an abstract colonnade (mirroring the 15th Street facade) or a 19th century cast iron industrial image as a conceptual basis for the project.

With respect to the Annex, the charrette team concluded that the 14th Street elevation is complete and straightforward. It would be helped by appropriate architectural lighting and landscaping, but it does not need extensive redevelopment.

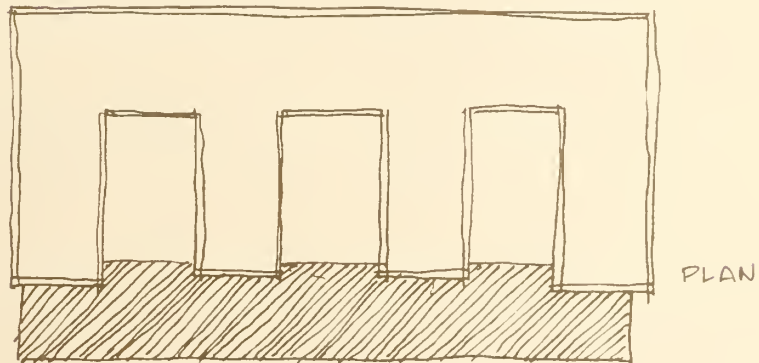


---

This alternative maintains the sunken drive as largely open. It does not resolve the design of the entrance bridge.



This design covers the sunken driveway, moves the facade out to establish a new building line and creates a new 14th Street entrance.



---

## Designing the Streetscape and Open Spaces

### Charrette Team Recommendation:

- Pedestrian crossings should be surfaced in distinctive paving.
- The transition from highway to city street should receive special design attention.
- A change in paving should be considered as a way to mark vehicular movement in and out of the buildings.
- A consistent design for protective barriers, bollards, paving and street furniture should be implemented throughout the site (including C, D and 15th Streets as well as 14th Street) in a way that enhances the sense of place and coherence of the gateway.
- The design team should prepare an open and public space proposal that complements the architecture and gateway concept, including a landscaping and paving scheme and guidelines for the development of the courtyards and the sidewalks throughout the site.

As connectors, pathways and the main axis through the gateway, the streets are important elements in the project. The conclusion of the charrette team, therefore, was that streetscape details should be thoughtfully developed and, to help unify the Southwest Gateway area, they should be integrated with the building and urban design proposals.

The team also found that the open and public spaces along the edges and in the courtyards of the buildings need attention. In terms of the 14th Street landscaping, seasonal planters, vines and pergolas and trees along the service road (if a retaining wall is built and filled with soil to provide enough root room) were suggested. Clearly, the whole site should be addressed in a landscape master plan. Attractively paved sidewalks should be developed as inviting places to stroll and experience the gateway. And in the courtyards, the pedestrian bridge should probably be redesigned and decking should be separated from the walls so as not to “bury” the basement, a necessary feature in classical architecture.

---

## Developing the Visitor Gateway and Entrance

### **Charrette Team Recommendation:**

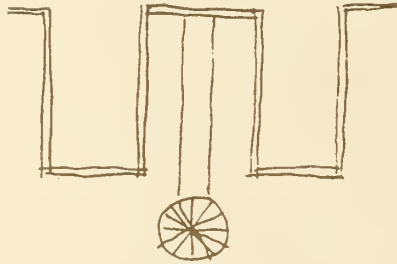
- A complete analysis of the visitor experience including movement sequence, waiting time, queuing, and the reaction to exhibit and sales areas should be prepared.
- A new public entrance to the Main Building should be designed that creates a welcoming and strong identity for the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.
- Many options should be evaluated to discover optimum design of the Main Building entry elements in relation to the existing building line and courtyard space as well as in relation to other functional and programmatic needs such as the truck underpass.
- As a complement to the design of the Main Building entrance itself, the entire visitor sequence from waiting and queuing to exhibition and sales should be studied and improved.
- The nighttime presence of both the Annex and the Main Building should be enhanced.

Although visitors are not the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's highest priority, accommodating 500,000 tourists per year (and perhaps more after the Holocaust Memorial Museum is complete) is a major task. In this context, the charrette team determined that the Southwest Gateway Project should be used as an opportunity to improve visitor safety and comfort as a facet of the larger design challenge discussed in the preceding pages.

A study of the visitor experience will identify problems and points of confusion and enable a design team to propose better ways to accommodate these people. Architecturally, this will certainly require redesigning the Main Building's entrance. The cast iron bridge might be restored, removing its "construction trailer" enclosure. At the point where the sloped walkway meets the sidewalk, a covered, open-air pavilion might spacially celebrate entry (see sketches on next page). Graphically, the gateway to the building might be hallmarked with signs, banners, and/or other heraldry, some of which might be as light-hearted and playful as an electronic counter that calculates the amount of money printed. A new waiting hall and exhibition space might be designed in the central courtyard, and more pleasant queuing and waiting areas should be provided.

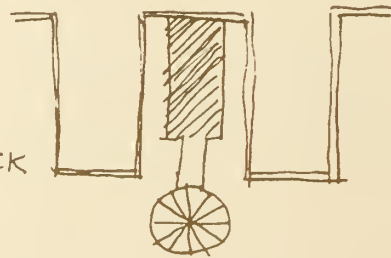
---

Sketch alternatives to the entrance design.



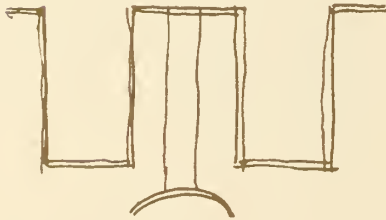
PLAN - ENTRY PAVILION

14TH STREET



PLAN - ENTRY PAVILION & DECK

14TH STREET



PLAN - SIGN / GRAPHIC

14TH STREET

# Background on the Buildings

---

## Main Building

The Main Building was completed in 1914 in the neo-classical architectural style and spans the block between 14th and 15th Streets, SW. It is the Bureau's primary production facility and the only major industrial facility in downtown Washington, occupying a 217,000 square foot site. The building is 505 feet in length and 105 feet in height, with four wings extending 296 feet from the 15th Street formal entrance east to 14th Street. Its ten acres of floor space include a basement, four stories and an attic. The facade contains 43,000 panes of glass which cover 60 percent of the wall surface.

While the west elevation along 15th Street (renamed Raoul Wallenberg Place) slopes to the tidal basin and gives the building a commanding presence and spacious formal entrance, the 14th Street side, or east elevation, abuts 14th Street and serves as the functional entrance. Visible from 14th Street are the four wings and a centrally located, covered walkway that provides tourist and employee access from the sidewalk to the building. The area between the street and the building is substantially lower in elevation than the street itself and is used for parking and industrial access. Along 14th Street, a retaining wall approximately 17 feet high at the northern property edge graduates to only a few feet at the southern boundary where vehicle access is available to 14th Street. The Bureau is currently installing a waste-water treatment

facility between the two northern wings over which a parking deck will be constructed that will tie into the retaining wall at the street elevation.

## Annex

The Annex, which is across 14th Street from the Main Building, occupies the block bounded by C Street on the north, 13th Street on the east and D Street on the south. This building was constructed in 1938 of reinforced concrete and has a center structure extending from 13th to 14th Street with five wings projecting from each side. The building is seven stories high with a subbasement, basement, attic, and penthouse. The basement, first, and second floors cover the entire foundation, with the wings beginning on the third floor. A small grassy area of approximately 20 feet surrounds most of the building. The public and employee entrances are located on 13th and 14th Streets. A loading dock facility is accessible from D Street.

The Annex and Main buildings are separated by approximately 200 feet and are connected by a tunnel under 14th Street (which is the covered bridge at the street level used by tourists and employees). The width of 14th Street varies as it enters the city but is approximately 120 feet wide at its intersection with C Street. Pedestrians crossing south of this point are restricted by a median barrier as 14th Street evolves from a city street to an urban expressway.

---

## Other Structures

Just to the north of the Main Building, the new U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum is under construction. On the other side of the Holocaust Museum is the first Bureau of Engraving and Printing building, a Romanesque-style structure completed in 1880 that was recently restored. To the south of the Main Building is the Department of Treasury's Liberty Loan Building. Narrow alleyways separate the Main Building from the two adjacent buildings.

North of the Annex is the Department of Agriculture's South Building, which occupies the entire blocks from 14th Street to 12th Street. To the east, across 13th Street, is the General Services Administration's (GSA) steam generating plant. South of D Street is an old railroad siding building used by the Bureau for chemical storage, the GSA coal shaker, and a parking lot. This entire area, bound by 14th, 12th, and going south to Maine Avenue on the waterfront, is included in the Portals, a mixed-use-development project.

## Context

As background, the charrette included presentations by Bureau managers and invited guests on several topics related to the Southwest Gateway Project. Many of the points made in these discussions are summarized here.

Running a secure and efficient printing operation is a Bureau of Engraving and Printing priority. In this respect, the buildings should be regarded as a high-tech factory complex that runs three shifts, 24 hours a day. To support production, the Main Building and the Annex house a wide range of heavy equipment including cooling towers, a vast network of exhaust ducts and stacks, enormous transformers, an extensive air handling system, incinerators, a waste water treatment plant, and hazardous waste storage, containment and disposal facilities. There is a constant flow of service vehicles as trucks deliver supplies and remove trash. Occasionally cranes are needed to remove or install large pieces of machinery.

Among the concerns demanding attention are the appearance of the facade and roofline as the plant is updated and expanded, a process that goes on continually at the Bureau (this is especially important as designs are reviewed by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts), the phasing in of new Web presses and related quality control and packaging equipment, accommodating tourists comfortably and safely, redesigning the rooftop cafeteria, and avoiding utility interruptions and the staging of contractors as renovations and up-dates take place.

The tour of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing is the 15th most popular attraction in Washington. Even with very limited hours — 9 to 2, Monday

---

through Saturday — more than 500,000 visitors come to see the currency printing operations. One issue is what to do as the number of tourists grow, a likely consequence of the 1993 opening of the Holocaust Memorial Museum next door.

A representative of the National Park Service described the Bureau of Engraving and Printing as an important element in Washington, DC's monumental core. As such, it is essential that the complex maintain its horizontal profile and not violate the rooflines with unsightly vertical towers or stacks. To give the Main Building greater prominence and reveal its powerful southern facade, the Bureau might work with the Treasury to evaluate the possibility of removing the "temporary" Liberty Loan Building. The path of visitors from the Tourmobile stop on 15th Street to the Bureau's tour entrance on 14th Street is another consideration.

There was also a presentation on the Holocaust Memorial Museum that is under construction just to the north of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's Main Building. The structure is composed of many forms and is based on the concept of a village. The 15th Street side is monumental, marked with a

chaste hexagonal "Hall of Remembrance," a pool and opening out to Wallenberg Place. The 14th Street facade is highlighted by a curved limestone screen wall and, in between the Museum and the Main Building, two service roads have been built.

The Portals project, adjacent to and south of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Annex, is transforming a non-pedestrian, industrial and railroad site into one of Washington, DC's major mixed-use developments. Construction will continue into the 21st century and the complex will include offices, a hotel and 100,000 square feet of retail space. A platform will be constructed above the railroad tracks to form a ground plane for a complex of buildings that establish a visual entry to the nation's capital and frame the vista from the southwest to the Capitol building along Maryland Avenue. The project will have its own internal plaza and a pedestrian bridge to the Potomac waterfront. Aesthetically, the Portals' design details are based on the architect's interpretation of classical architecture. Functionally, when the last phase of the project is completed, it will include loading docks with access to the Bureau Annex.

# Charrette Agenda

---

Thursday, March 28

---

12:30 pm

**Welcome**

Peter H. Daly, Director,  
Bureau of Engraving and Printing

**Remarks**

Mina Berryman, Director,  
Design Arts Program, NEA

George Shue, Chief,  
Office of Engineering, BEP

James Shaw, Chief,  
Office of Security, BEP

Ira Polikoff, Chief,  
Office of Public Affairs, BEP

John Parsons, Associate  
Regional Director,  
National Capital,  
U.S. Department of the Interior,  
National Park Service

**Briefing**

Holocaust Memorial Museum

Gerald Gurland,  
Construction Coordinator,  
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council

Craig Dumas,  
Pei, Cobb, Fried & Partners

Break

**Briefing**

Portals

Arthur Cotton Moore, Architect,  
Arthur Cotton Moore Associates

**Tour of Site for Design Panel**

Tour of Production  
Design Panel Discussion

6:30 pm

Dinner Meeting  
Bureau Visitors Center

Friday, March 29

---

8:30 am Charrette Convenes

11:45 am Lunch Break

12:15 pm Afternoon Session

4:30 pm Adjourn



# Charrette Participants

---

**Ronald Thomas** – *Charrette Chair*  
(Seattle, WA)

An urban designer and planner with Jones & Jones, Mr. Thomas has pioneered management, process, and communication programs in cities across the country to aid them in their revitalization and development efforts. He has written extensively and lectured on the subjects of urban and community design, including *Cities by Design* and *Taking Charge: How Communities Are Planning Their Futures*. The director of national programs, including the Urban Design program for the National League of Cities, the Community Development Excellence Program for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the National Design Awards for the U.S. Department of Transportation, he has received numerous design awards in planning, communication design and urban design. Mr. Thomas holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Oklahoma, a Master of Visual Communication from Syracuse University, and has completed a Harvard University Management Program.

**Deborah Dalton**  
(Raleigh, NC)

Currently Associate Dean of the School of Design at North Carolina State University, and Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture, Ms. Dalton was formerly with Skidmore Owings & Merrill in Chicago, where her work focused on the new Jeddah International Airport in Saudi Arabia. She also has practiced with The Planning Collaborative in San Francisco, where she worked on housing, site planning, visual analysis, environmental impact assessments, and projects with the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers; and with Brown Heldt Associates, also of San Francisco, where she focused on an environmental analysis for the master plan update for the Marine Corps Base at Camp Pendleton. Ms. Dalton is a Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and has been published in *Landscape Architecture* magazine. She also received an award from the Society of Environmental Graphic Designers and the Southwest Regional ASLA for a recent landscape art installation. She received her undergraduate and Master of Landscape Architecture degrees from the University of Pennsylvania.

**Hugh Hardy**  
(New York, NY)

A partner in Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, Mr. Hardy has been a practicing architect for more than 35 years. He began his career as a federal designer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and formed his own firm in 1962, which received the 1981 Architectural Firm Award from the American Institute of Architects. His work has been recognized for its rich understanding of context, including restoration/renovation of the Majestic Theatre, Brooklyn; the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, NY; the St. Louis Art Museum; and three floors of the RCA Building, NY. Recent work includes the Wellesley College Sports Center, Wellesley, MA; the Alice Busch Opera Theatre, Cooperstown, NY; the Riverbank West apartments, NY; and the addition of six floors to the landmark B. Altman's building in mid-town Manhattan. He served as chairman of the 1990 GSA Design Awards and currently serves as Vice President of the Municipal Arts Society and Vice President of Architecture of the Architectural League of New York. He is a fellow of the American Institute of Architects

---

and in 1988 received the Benjamin West Clinedinst Medal of the Artists' Fellowship, Inc., for achievement of "exceptional artistic merit."

**Barton Phelps**

(Los Angeles, CA)

Principal of Barton Phelps & Associates, Architects and Planners, Mr. Phelps is also an Associate Professor of Architecture at UCLA's Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning where he teaches design and landscape studies. He formerly held the position of Director of Architecture at the Urban Innovations Group in Los Angeles. His current work includes industrial facilities, libraries, exhibition design, schools and residential projects. A director of the Committee for Design of the American Institute of Architects, he is Chairman of the Editorial Board of *Architecture California*. His work has received AIA design awards at state and national levels and has been published internationally. He received fellowships in design research from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts. In 1986 he was a finalist in the NEA-sponsored design competition for Pershing Square in Los Angeles.

**Michael Southworth**

(Berkeley, CA)

Currently Associate Professor of Urban Design and Environmental Planning at the Departments of Landscape Architecture and City and Regional Planning at the University of California at Berkeley, Mr. Southworth is also a partner in Michael & Susan Southworth/City Design & Architecture.

His major work has included information systems to enhance education and communication functions of cities, reuse and preservation plans for older cities, and design of open space networks. He has been widely published and has co-authored several books with Susan Southworth, including *AIA Guide to Boston*, *Maps*, *Oakland Explorers Kids' Guide*, *Trains and Trolleys — A Kid's Guide*, and *Ornamental Ironwork: An Illustrated Guide to its Design, History, and Use in America Architecture*. Mr. Southworth has received numerous honors and awards, including a USA Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Graham Foundation grant and in 1990 received a Rockefeller Foundation Residency Fellowship to the Bellagio Study and Conference Center in Italy.

**John Waite**

(Albany, NY)

Principal of the firm Mesick, Cohen, Waite Architects, Mr. Waite has been in private practice for 15 years and was formerly senior historical architect for the State of New York for 13 years. Recent restoration projects include Blair House and the Octagon in Washington, DC, the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg, and the Homewood and Evergreen historic houses at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. He has published numerous books and articles on historic preservation, the most recent being *Ontario County Court House: Its History and Restoration*. Mr. Waite is a founder and former board member of the Society for Industrial Archaeology. He received both a Bachelor of Architecture and of Science from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and a Master of Architecture from Columbia University.



